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SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/PD, AF/W, PD/IIP AND ECA/A/L/W
PARIS FOR ARS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OEXC](#) [SCUL](#) [KPAO](#) [BN](#)

SUBJECT: BENIN MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY OBSERVANCE: 'BOYCOTT' FILM
SCREENINGS

¶1. SUMMARY: From January 13 to January 20, 2010, PAS Cotonou organized screenings of 'Boycott' in observance of Martin Luther King Day. 'Boycott' dramatizes events triggered in Montgomery, Alabama on December 1, 1955, when Rosa Parks was arrested after refusing to surrender her seat in the 'white' section of a public bus. 'Boycott' was shown to students at the American Cultural Center and high schools and universities in and beyond Cotonou. END SUMMARY.

¶2. DATE OF ACTIVITY: January 13-20; Second quarter, FY10.

¶3. PROGRAM JUSTIFICATION/OBJECTIVES: Observation of Martin Luther King Day and to further mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of Benin.

¶4. DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: 'Boycott' provides insight into the civil-rights movement in the United States. The film was screened January 13 at the American Cultural Center to students from the English International School, the Nigerian International School, and New Covenant American School International -- all private schools in Cotonou with pre-school, primary and secondary classes. A PAS team also screened 'Boycott' at Martin Luther King School, a private school in Cotonou; Houdegbe North American University, a private university in Cotonou; and CEG Come, a public high school 60 km from Cotonou. Schools prepared students for this film through roundtables on United States history, segregation, and America's civil-rights movement. Most students were required to prepare a written report on the film.

¶5. MPP UMBRELLA THEMES AND AUDIENCE REACHED:

- Promoting Education
- Promoting Mutual Understanding
- Q Investing in People
- Maintaining Support for the United States
- Securing a Platform for USG Programs in Benin

The film attracted over 400 viewers, including students, teachers, English club members, Peace Corps Volunteers, and U.S. Mission staff members.

¶6. RESULT/IMPACT: Excellent Students enjoyed an excellent depiction of the 381-day boycott of the Montgomery bus system and how the boycott spurred the U.S. civil-rights movement.

¶7. NON-USG SOURCES OF IN-COUNTRY FUNDING/IN KIND SUPPORT: None.

¶11. QUALITY OF USG SUPPORT: Excellent. Kudos to Cotonou's PAS team for this program.

KNIGHT